

719. a-25
11
A true and most

Dreadfull discourse of a wo-
man possessed with the Devill: who in
the likenesse of a headlesse Beare fet-
ched her out of her Bedd, and in the presence of se-
uen persons, most straungely roulled her thro-
row three Chambers, and doune a high
paire of staires, on the tower and
twentie of May last. 1584.

At Diche in Som-
mersetshire.

A matter as miraculous as euer was
seen in our time.



Imprinted at London for Thomas Nelson.

A true and most

Discreet account of a

man possessed with the

the libels of a

and out of his

new poems, and

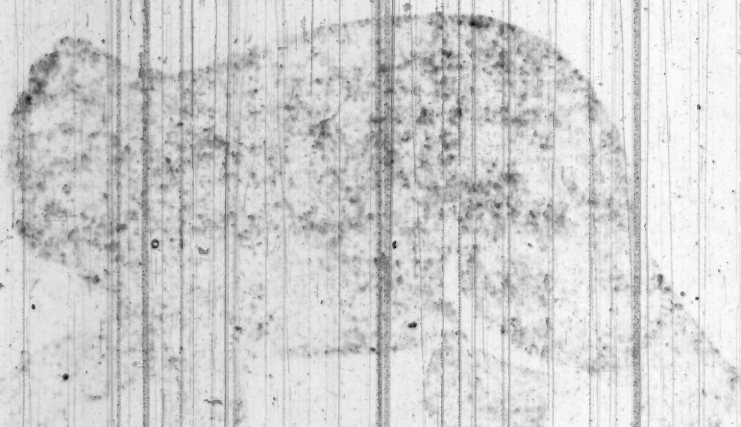
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To the Reader.



Eloued and curtions reader, we haue to consider by this strange discourse, how redy Satban is to take hold on vs if we fall from God neuer so little.

He cōtinually runneth up and downe seeking whom he may deuour: But notwithstanding his temptations which are great, the mercie of God is greater, who neuer faileth to send comfort in temptation, if we accept thereof.

Great are the examples, both of Gods mercy and might, to put vs in remembrance of our sinnes which are infinite and lothsome, wherein if we continue, let vs vndoubtedly looke for the reward thereof, which is an everlasting destruction both of bodie and soule.

Let not this which is here declared seeme a fained fable vnto thee, but assure thy selfe that all such thinges are sent as warnignes for our wickednesse: and to put vs in mynd of the

TO THE READER.

State of our saluation, which is an assured faith
in Christ Iesus: from which pillar if wee once
shrinke, the Tempter is redie to drine us in to
dispaier of Gods mercie,

Many are the woonders which hath lately
happened, as of suddaine and straunge death
upon periured persons, straunge sights in the
Aier, straunge birches on the Earth: Earth
quakes, commetts and fiery Impressions, and
all to put us in mynde of God, whose woorkes
are wonderfull.

Remember the late storme of haylstones in
which many thinges were flaine and beaten to
so the ground, which Hailestones were equall
in greatnesse to a Goose Egge, of eight inches
about.

These and suche like examples (good Rea-
der) warneth us to be watchfull for the day of
the Lorde which is at hand, least sodainly his
Wrath be kindled against us. Let vs therefore
pray to almightie God to hold backe his Rod,
to be mercifull to us, and to forgine vs all

that is past: that through the assi-
stance of his Spirit, we may
with penitent hartes live
in his feare to our
liues ende.

FINIS.



Straunge Newes out of Sommerſet ſhire.



Upon the ninth day of May
laſt paſt Anno. 1584. There
was a Woman of honourable re-
putation, dwelling in the
Towne of Diche, which is
within three miles of Bru-
ſon (the moſt antient Towne within So-
merſet ſhire) whoſe name is Stephen Cooper
(a man of good wealth and well beloned of
his neighbours:) who being ſicke, and lying
in a weak ſtate, ſent his wife (whoſe name
was Margeret Cooper) vppon the ninth
daie of Maie laſt paſt into Gloſter-ſhire, to
take order concerning a Farme whiche he
hath in a Tilledge called Rockhampton, alias
Rockington, at whoſe comming thither, it
ſeemed all things were not according to her
minde. Thus continuing there one daie and
ſomething more, ſhe returned home to her
huſbande, partly agreed at ſuch things
as ſhe thought her huſbande might reforme

Strange Newes

if GOD lent him life. Now when she was come home againe to *Diche*, she founde her husband recovered to an indifferent health: to whom she began to vse very muche idle talke, as well concerning the same *Farne*, as also concerning an old groate which her sonne (being a little boy) had found about one weeke befoze. Thus she continued (as it were one that had been bewitched or haunted with some euill spirite) vntill Tuesdaye at night following, whiche night she tooke her rest something indifferently vntill towards the morning: at whiche time she began with much vaine speech to disquiet her husbände, and to vse much idle talke: but her husbände seeing her in such a minde, and finding that she was as it were one that were desperate, he perswaded her to call vppon God, and that being the creature of God she should not forget to call vppon her Creator in the daie of trouble: wherefoze he counselled her to praie with him, and to saie the *Lords Prayer* after him, whiche she partly did: But the deuill who alwaie doth builde his Chappell so neere as hee maye to beere Gods Church, began to withdraw her from Prayer, and put her in minde to call in most fearfull

out of Sommerfetshire.

fearfull sorte for the groate which her sonne
had lately founde, as also for her Wedding
ring, desiring to see them with all speede:
her husbände made no great hast thereunto,
but continued in prayer, that it would please
God to sende her a more quiet spirit, and to
strengthen her, that faithe might speedely
vanquish such vanitie in her. But the more
he prayed and perswaded her to prayer, the
more she seemed to bee as it were troubled
with some euill Spirit, calling still for the
olde groate whiche her husbände neglected
to shew her: whereat she began with a very
sterne and staring countenaunce to looke on
her husbände in most wonderfull sorte, as
that he was sore frightened with the same. Thē
he called for her Sister, for that he was not
able to keepe her in the bed: which when her
Sister and other were come into the Cham-
ber, they kept her downe violently in y^e bed:
and forthwith she was so sore tormented that
she fomed at the mouth, and was shakē with
suche force that the Bedd and the Chamber
did shake and moue in most straunge sorte:
her husbände continued praying for her de-
liueraunce: so that within one halfe hower
after her shaking was left, she began to tell

A.v.

them

Strange Newes

then that she had been in the Countie to beat
awaie the Beere whiche followed her into
the Parke when she came out of the Coun-
trie, which to her thinking had no hed. Then
her husbande and freendes perswaded her
to leaue those vaine imaginations, perswa-
ding her that it was nothing but the light-
nesse of her braine whiche was become idle
for want of rest. Wherefore her husband and
freendes perswaded her to saie the Lordes
Prayer with them, which she did, and after
tooke some small rest: And thus she remai-
ned vntill the Sunday following: in which
time she continued raging as it were be-
straught of her memoire, whiche came by
fittes, to the greate greefe of her husbande,
freendes and neighbours. Vppon the Sat-
terday following there was good hope of
her recoverie, for that she in the night before
had taken some reasonable rest: her freendes
and neighbours came to comforte her, yet
sometime she would talke somewhat idely
to them, which came by small fittes. And v-
pon the Sunday she seemed very patient
and confirmable to reason, vntill midnight:
at which time the Candle which was set vp
burning in the same Chamber was turned
out:

out of Sommerfetshire.

one: She then suddenly waking called to her husbande and cryed out, saying, that she did see a straunge thing like vnto a Snake, carrying fire in most wonderful sort: Whereat her husbande was amazed: and seeing the Candle was cleane burnt out, called to his Brother and her Sister (whiche were in the house with other of their freendes watching and sitting by, to comfort her if her extreame fit should any way molest her) who hearing her husbande call, came in and brought a Candle lighted and set it on the table, which stood neere where the woman lay: She began then to waxe as one very fearefull, saying to her husbande and the rest, doe you not see the Deuill: whereat they desired her to remember God and to call for grace, that her faith might be onely fixed vpon him to the vanquishing of the Deuill, and his assaults. Well (quoth she) if you see nothing now, you shall see something by and by: and forthwith they heard a noise in the streete as it had been the coming of two or three Carts, and presently they in the Chamber cried out saying: Lord helpe vs what maner of thing is this that cometh here. Then her husbande looking by in his bedd espied a thing

come

Straunge Newes

come to the bedd muche like vnto a Beare,
but it had no head nor no taile, halfe a yarde
in length and halfe a yarde in height: her
husbande seeing it come by to the bed, rose
vp and tooke a ioyned stoole and stroke at
the saied thing, the stroke sounded as though
he had stroken vpon a featherbedd: then it
came to the woman and stroke her three ti-
mes vpon the feete, and tooke her out of the
bed, and so rouled her to & fro in the Cham-
ber, and vnder the bed: The people there pre-
sent to the number of seuen persons were so
greatly amazed with this horrible sight,
that they knewe not what to doe, yet they
called still vpon God for his assistaunce: but
the Candle was so dimme that they could
scarsly see one another. At the last this Mon-
ster whiche we suppose to be the Deuill, did
thrust the womans hed betwixt her legges,
and so rouled her in a rounde compasse like
an Hoop through three other Chambers
downe an high paire of staires in the Hall,
where he kept her the space of a quarter of
an hower: Her husbande and they in the
Chamber aboue durst not come downe to
her, but remained in praier weeping at the
staires head, greuously lamenting to see
her

out of Sommerſetſhire.

her ſo caried away. There was ſuche an horrible ſtincke in the Hall, and ſuche fierie flames, that they were glad to ſtoppe their noſes with cloathes and napkins. Then the woman cried out calling to her huſbande, now he is gone: then (quoth he) in the name of God come vp to me, and ſo euen vpon the ſuddaine ſhe was come ſo quickly that they greatly marueiled at it. Then they brought her to bedd, and ſower of them kept downe the cloathes about the bedd, and continued in Prayer for her. The Candle in the Chamber could not burne cleere but was very dimme, and ſuddenly the woman was got out of the bed, and the windowe at the beds hed opened, whether the woman did vnpin the windowe, or how it came to paſſe they knewe not, but it was opened, and the womans legges after a marueilous maner thruſt out at the windowe, ſo that they were clasp'd about the poſt in the middle of the windowe betweene her legges: The people in the Chamber heard a thing knocke at her feete as it had been vpon a Tubbe, and they ſawe a great fire as it ſeemed to them at her feete, the ſtincke whereof was horrible: The ſorrowfull huſbande and his brother imboldened

Strange Names

beued themselves in the Lorde, & did charge
the Deuill in the name of the Father, the
Sonne, and the holy Ghost, to departe from
her and to trouble her no more: then they
laied handes on her and cried to the Lorde
to helpe them in that their greate neede, and
so pulde her in againe and set her bypon her
fette: Then she looked out at a window and
began to saie: O Lord (quoth she) me thinke
I see a little childe, but they gaue no regard
to her: These wordes she spake two or thre
times: so at the last they all looked out at the
windowe: and loe they espied a thing like
vnto a little child with a very bright shining
countenaunce, casting a greate light in the
Chamber, & then the Candle burned very
brightly, so that they might one see another:
then fell they flat to the ground and praised
the Lorde that he had so wonderfully assisted
them, and so the child vanished awaie. Then
the woman beeing in some better feeling of
her self was laied in her bedd, and she asked
forgiuenesse at Gods handes, and of all that
she had offended, acknowledging that it
was for her sinnes that she was so tormented
of the euill Spirite. And so God be thanked
she hath euer since beene in some reasonable
order

out of Sommerſetſhire.

order, for there hath bene with her many
godly learn'd men, as Maſter Doctor Cor-
rington, Parſon of the ſame Towne, and
Maſter Nicholles Preacher of Bruton,
with other cheefe Preachers
from diuers places of the
Countrey.

FINIS.



¶ Theſe be the names of the Wit-
neſſes, that this is moſt true.

Steven Cooper.

John Cooper.

Ales Eaſton.

John Tomſon.

John Anderton.

Myles Foſter.

With diuers others.